



Packing your backpack



Packing your backpack- we have spare at school

1:PUT YOUR SLEEPING STUFF IN FIRST

The bottom of my bag is saved for my roll mat and sleeping bag which is always the last thing you'll need access to at the end of the day.

2:LEAVE YOUR PJ'S IN YOUR SLEEPING BAG

Throwing your PJ's in the bottom of your sleeping bag is another quick time saver. It keeps them away from your smelly hiking clothes and easy to grab when you set up camp in the evening.



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3: SPLIT EVERYTHING USING SMALLER STUFF SACKS

Use different coloured stuff sacks to help organise things in your bag. It also adds extra waterproof protection. Use a bag for clothes, another for cooking items, first aid kit and then one for odd bits (battery packs, toiletries, gaffer tape, etc)



4: KEEP YOUR SNACKS IN YOUR STRAP POCKETS

Most backpacks come with handy strap pockets. This is where I keep snacks which are easy to grab throughout the day when I need an energy boost.



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KEEP THE TOP POCKET FOR ESSENTIAL ITEMS

In the top of your bag goes the essential items that you might need to grab throughout the day. That includes first aid kit, head torch (in case you end up walking/arriving at camp when it's dark) and shovel. At the top of the main section in the backpack, always have a fleece and warm hat for easy access when you take breaks, as well as your waterproofs.



GET A HOLDER FOR YOUR MAP

If using a map, have a map case with a strap that you can then attach securely to your rucksack. You can then tuck it under one of the bag straps without worrying about it falling out and losing it. This is much easier than having to get it in and out of a pocket all the time.

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GET THE WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION RIGHT

The biggest learning curve when learning how to pack a backpack is packing too much. The second biggest is distributing it well.

A badly distributed bag can really hurt your back. You are aiming to have the weight evenly distributed with the heavy items closest to your back and central. This allows you to tightly secure your bag with the weight predominantly on the hips (using the hip straps). The worst place to have heavy items is in the top or on the outer sections of the bag as this will pull your shoulders back.



USE A HYDRATION SYSTEM

Although they can be fiddly to fill up having a hydration bladder is the easiest way to drink as a hiker. It also really helps with distributing weight in the bag. Water will likely be one of your heaviest items so you can put the bladder right up against your back in the main pack and lower down as you won't need access to it regularly.

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PACK BEFORE YOU GO TO BED

Before sleeping I get my bag organised for the next day. I fill up water and replenish my snack pockets. This makes getting going in the morning when you are sleepy and often most demotivated so much easier.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jBDido6uX9k>